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Canada's response to the
director-general of UNESCO



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**Canada's Response
to the Director-General of UNESCO
following his consultation with
Member States, Associate Members,
Intergovernmental Organizations and
International Non-governmental Organizations
on the preparation of the
Draft Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001
and the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997
(CL/3345 dated 8 March 1994)**



Ottawa, Canada
29 July 1994

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Director-General of UNESCO considers his Working Document for consultation on the Draft Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001 and the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997 as a sort of "table of contents." This is how he described it in the letter (CL/3345) that accompanied the document. The letter and its two appendices can be found in Appendix A.

While we recognize the difficulty of preparing a document that is intended as both a brief guide for the future and the basis for concrete action for the next two years, we were struck by the fact that the dividing line between the future 28 C/4 (Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001) and the 28 C/5 (Programme and Budget for 1996-1997) is often quite unclear. Consequently, in our response, it has sometimes been difficult to target our remarks as specifically as we would have liked on either the 28 C/4 or the 28 C/5.

Despite this problem, we feel that the 38 paragraphs of the Working Document provide interesting material for reflection and we thank the Director-General for straying from the beaten path in inviting us to consider a Plan and Programme that differ from those of the past. He will doubtless be disappointed to note that for reasons we explain further on, we are not ready at this point in time to support some of the radical changes proposed.

From the outset, we want to point out as a general principle throughout that we place great importance on the use of non-sexist language in all UNESCO documents, and particularly in the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme and Budget. It would be opportune for UNESCO to apply the rules that it has itself adopted on this subject, considering that we are only a few months away from the United Nations World Conference on Women planned for September 1995 in Beijing.

The following document was prepared by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO following widespread consultation with Canadian specialists in UNESCO's fields of competence, both within the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and elsewhere. The federal, provincial and territorial governments submitted their comments and opinions to the Canadian Commission, as did a large number of non-governmental organizations, professional associations, research institutions and individuals.

II. STRUCTURE OF THE DRAFT PLAN AND DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

(Section IV, Paragraphs 34 to 37 of the Working Document)

Canada has decided to first address the questions raised at the end of the Working Document, since they are both the most complex (although apparently simple) and the most fundamental: how, we are asked, should the future Plan and Programme and Budget be structured, and what should they contain?

The choice of these basic frameworks will be a determining factor, for the final presentation of these two documents will constitute the image of the Organization as it enters the third millennium.

A. Organization of the Medium-Term Plan (1996-2001)

1 Proposal for a new title: *Medium-Term Planning: strategies of reflection and action for UNESCO 1996-2001*

Before discussing the contents of the Plan, we feel it is important to come to an agreement with the Director-General on its final title. Since this is intended as an innovative and simple instrument in comparison with its predecessors, its title should reflect the new reality. Canada proposes that the document be entitled: "Medium-Term Planning: Strategies of Reflection and Action for UNESCO 1996-2001."

We have already proposed this title to a number of other Member States in the course of the past year, and our proposal has been supported by the Europe Region and by a number of Member States from other Regions with whom we have discussed it.

This title presents a number of advantages. The term "reflection" covers the Organization's intellectual role, while the term "action" synthesizes the three key words put forward by the Director-General: anticipation, adaptation and innovation (see the letter signed by the Director-General which accompanied his Working Document). The word "planning" gives the impression of an organization that is not spinning its wheels. This will also make it easier to modify the 28 C/4 in the course of its six-year duration.

2. Structure of the Plan

The Director-General proposes two approaches. The first would reflect our fields of competence, while the second would reflect the main problems and issues in today's world. He appears to favour the second approach.

Canada is in favour of the first option; although at first glance the second seems more attractive, it is also far less practical. The next chapter of our response will explain what we feel should be included in the Plan. For now, we can explain our choice by the fact that we feel it is essential for the Plan to have signposts that are specific to UNESCO: education; science; culture; communication, information and informatics; and social and human sciences (including human rights and international development).

B. Structure of the Programme and Budget for 1996-1997

The response of Member States on the structure of the Programme and Budget is extremely important, for it will largely determine the operations of the Secretariat.

We have thus addressed this problem with a consideration to the daily life of the Organization.

1. Place, purpose and operation of interdisciplinarity/intersectorality in the Organization

We have decided to address the issue of interdisciplinarity/intersectorality before responding to the matter of the structure proper of the Programme and Budget because it is in many ways the cornerstone of the programme, and must be thoroughly examined before determining the future presentation of the 28 C/5.

Let us be clear on this: interdisciplinarity/intersectorality is what UNESCO is all about. Every day, both at Headquarters and within the Member States, we deal with education and citizenship; education and human rights; education and the environment; women; youth; and so on. However, the reality of the Secretariat rejects the intersectoral approach that guarantees the successful study and resolution of these problems. We could give a number of examples under this heading, but such is not the purpose of this document.

The UNESCO sectors are airtight universes, and all too often, those in different sectors who are working on the same issues do not even communicate.

What can we do to make interdisciplinarity/intersectorality work properly? The introduction of new terminology is not the answer, and we regret the introduction of the term "transdisciplinarity", which leads to confusion more than anything else. Why not stick with the term we are already familiar with, and which means the same thing? In the Programme and Budget for 1992-1993 there were Mobilizing Projects whose nature was unquestionably interdisciplinary/intersectoral. They were doomed to failure and obscurity. It would be important to know and understand the reasons prior to venturing into new fields. The current Programme and Budget (1994-1995) includes an ambitious project enthusiastically supported by a large number of Member States, including Canada, at the 27th Session of the General Conference. This is the interdisciplinary and inter-agency co-operation project: "Environment and population education and information for

human development." The project is listed under Major Programme Area I (Education) in the approved 27 C/5.

It is worth recalling that during the 27th Session of the General Conference, Canada had to insist in order that this project be included in the resolutions adopted by the Commissions of the Natural Sciences and Social and Human Sciences programmes? What seemed normal to Canada did not seem so to the Secretariat when in drafted the 27 C/5. We cannot help but wonder whether the ground will ever be prepared for the implementation of truly interdisciplinary/intersectoral projects at the UNESCO Secretariat.

The Director-General must meet an extremely difficult challenge: he must introduce interdisciplinarity/intersectorality into the work habits of his officers.

The new interdisciplinary and inter-agency project will doubtless prove to be the test case in this matter. It seems to have been designed as a mini-sector rather than being integrated into the existing sectors. We are afraid -- and we hope the future will prove us wrong -- that the potential multiplication of such projects will create a parallel C/5 and Secretariat whose principal objective will be to "implement interdisciplinarity" while those officers who should be putting it into practice on a daily basis risk feeling demotivated in this aspect of their work.

Canada is well aware that the implementation of interdisciplinary/intersectoral actions requires extra time and effort, for we ourselves have opted for this approach over close to two years now. We do not underestimate the difficulties facing the Director-General and his Secretariat, and we will continue to give them our firm support.

2. Structure of the Programme and Budget :

2.1 Simple or Composite Structure?

In Paragraph 37 of his Working Document, the Director-General asks a number of questions concerning structure. For the next Programme and Budget, he envisages either "maintaining the present structure" or implementing a "composite structure." Canada favours the proposal for a composite structure. We support the maintenance of the present major programme areas (which correspond to UNESCO's fields of competence) with the addition of two or three major transverse - by nature interdisciplinary/intersectoral - projects aimed at addressing new problems that come under UNESCO's responsibility.

We favour the structure that exists in the present Programme and Budget (27 C/5) in that the interdisciplinary/inter-agency project mentioned above constitutes a major transverse project.

One caution, however: we must limit ourselves to a reasonable number of transverse projects -- two or three maximum (especially since the present project will doubtless be carried on beyond the present C/5), and they must be clearly identified with the Organization's fields of competence. Otherwise, the current image of scattered resources will be confirmed and will be very detrimental to UNESCO's image over-all.

2.2 How many Major Programme Areas should be kept?

We believe that the current number of Major Programme Areas is a faithful reflection of the work of the Organization, and we favour the maintenance of five major programme areas.

We do not believe it is necessary to retain the numerous subheadings under these Major Programme Areas. It would be sufficient to entitle them as follows:

Major Programme Area I:	Education
Major Programme Area II:	Science
Major Programme Area III:	Culture
Major Programme Area IV:	Communication, Information and Informatics
Major Programme Area V:	Social and Human Sciences

It must be remembered that the Second Medium-Term Plan (1984-1989) included 14 Major Programmes, and that the agreement reached by Member States over the years is a sign of real progress.

2.3 Should the present three-tier arrangement be maintained?

We believe that the three-tier arrangement should be maintained -- major programme areas, programmes and sub-programmes -- as this structure allows for an easier reading of a very dense text.

These reference points (or others if the Secretariat wishes to propose them) are indispensable to users both within and without UNESCO. The three tiers are not readily found when leafing through the 27 C/5; the Secretariat should take the necessary steps to render them more visible in the 28 C/5.

2.4 Should transverse themes and programmes be maintained or integrated within Major Programme Areas?

Canada feels it would be a step backwards to integrate the Transverse Themes within the Major Programme Areas. Given its preference for making a composite structure official (we feel that this type of structure was set up when the interdisciplinary/inter-agency project was approved), Canada wonders how we could possibly cease to maintain one of the tangible manifestations of interdisciplinarity/intersectorality, i.e. the Transverse Themes on Women and Youth.

2.5 What place should be reserved for activities known as "Support for Programme Execution?"

The chapter of the C/5 traditionally entitled "Support for Programme Execution" is a sort of catch-all section, and we find this unfortunate. National Commissions, UNESCO Clubs, NGOs, the Office of Public Information, Extra-budgetary funding sources (the principal source of programme implementation), the Modernization and Innovation Unit, all seem thrown together without the reader being given a clear understanding of their respective roles and significance.

In the next Programme and Budget (28 C/5), it would be a good idea for these various elements to at least be listed in the table of contents. Otherwise, their existence is only apparent to very attentive readers.

We are particularly sorry that the National Commissions, which are the only UNESCO partners (with the exception of the Member States) that appear in the Charter and which are being given ever more responsibilities by the Organization, are not given the place they deserve in the C/5. We would like the Director-General to consider placing more emphasis on the National Commissions in the 28 C/5.

2.6 What place should be reserved for administrative activities?

We feel it would be opportune for the chapter on administrative services to appear at the end of the C/5. However, certain sections should be filled out: the chapter on the Bureau of Personnel gives no indication as to the size or assignment of personnel. This type of information would definitely contribute to a better perception of the implementation of the Director-General's policy of transparency.

III. CONTENTS OF THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN : PROPOSAL FOR A FRAMEWORK

In the following paragraphs, Canada wishes to propose the main elements of a basic framework for the Fourth Plan. The headings that follow could be used as chapter headings for the new Plan if we want this publication to become a legible, practical, easily modified, realistic and persuasive tool.

A. Fourth Medium-Term Plan 1996-2001, a new formula : roadmap and promotional instrument

There are already three Medium-Term Plans in existence, and we can safely say that they belong to another era. They are documents that were intended as the repositories of the Organization's philosophy over six years. The most recent (which still applies, since it covers the period 1990-1995) was the subject of countless negotiations prior to its approval. It includes 556 paragraphs spread over 233 pages. In many ways, it is a yoke that is difficult to throw off. When we reread it today, we realize that the Programmes and Budgets approved since that time have gone well beyond it.

In fact, it is so long that few UNESCO users have read it, and those that have have probably forgotten it.

This is why Canada supports a Fourth Medium-Term Plan that would serve as a roadmap for the Organization. In other words, those who are not familiar with the Organization should be able to look at the Plan and get a clear idea of what the Organization is and where it is going. The "new" Plan should be a slightly longer and more sophisticated version of the information brochure, "What Is UNESCO?" whose most recent version dates back to 1992.

B. The four watchwords of the new Plan

The Organization has a reputation for wanting to do too much. It is interested in everything and seems to believe it can solve all the world's problems. People often wonder where it is headed and what it is guided by. Canada is convinced that in order to affirm its credibility, the Organization needs to base its plan on the following four points:

1. bring its ambitions in line with its abilities (i.e. restrict itself to what is possible);
2. better target its action;
3. learn how to say no (for example, is it useful or necessary to take part in every United Nations Conference?);

4. update its achievements (we need to build on positive results, rather than create the impression of starting over at zero each time).

C. Overview of major world problems

The new Plan should begin with a brief review of the major problems of the day. We should avoid making absolute affirmations such as that found in the first paragraph of the document. It is not sure that "never before in history...". This short overview of major world challenges should be written in more subtle language. Such a list appears already in Paragraph 4 of the Director-General's Working Document. It could also address other issues such as the escalation of poverty and the democratic transition, their impact on populations and particularly on women, the globalization of exchanges, the complex systems of tariffs and free trade, the concentration of production, the role of huge multinationals that are not accountable to elected authorities ... all of these issues, as well as those quoted in the document, affect human rights, democracy, access to culture, the development of education and, ultimately, peace.

However, UNESCO must not create the impression that it wants or is able to resolve all of these questions. The Plan should note them so that readers can take the pulse of the world in reading through one or two paragraphs.

This part of the Plan could be updated when each of the Programmes and Budgets that appear throughout the duration of the Plan are prepared.

D. A common background : The United Nations System

After briefly describing the world situation, the new Plan should provide a brief explanation of the United Nations System to help the international community respond to its challenges.

It would be very useful to make the distinction between the specialized agencies of the system and the other components. The organization chart to this effect should be included in the annex.

We must remember that the entire system was created with one goal in mind: lasting peace. The two objectives under Paragraph 7 of the Director-General's Working Document, "the consolidation of peace" and "the promotion of sustainable human development," are not exclusive to UNESCO; they are objectives for the system as a whole.

The next component of the framework must go from the general to the specific, and look at what distinguishes UNESCO from the other specialized agencies of the system.

E. Unique nature of UNESCO within the United Nations System

1. The UNESCO Constitution

First and foremost, the new Plan must be based on the UNESCO Constitution and make specific reference to it when referring to elements that are specific to the Organization. Without quoting it in its entirety, the Plan should recall UNESCO's mission of "intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity" (see Introduction to the UNESCO Constitution).

It must be remembered that UNESCO has the following specialized instruments: education; science; culture; communication, information and informatics; and social and human sciences. The Plan must quote all five areas, and not just the first three or four as it has traditionally done.

2. Loss of UNESCO's monopoly in its fields of competence

For a series of reasons that could be enumerated in the new Plan, UNESCO is no longer the only international body looking at education, science, culture, communication and social and human sciences.

The when and how of this situation should be briefly analyzed, pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of this development and describing the situations of competition and complementarity that are thus created. We cannot ignore the increasingly important position held by the World Bank in matters of education or by the Council of Europe in culture, to cite but two examples. Otherwise, the Organization gives the impression that it is disregarding reality.

3. Mechanisms of co-operation between UNESCO, other members of the United Nations System, and other multilateral organizations

Once the new landscape of UNESCO's own fields of competence has been mentioned, it would be useful to provide a brief description of the existing mechanisms of co-operation (such as the Director-General's participation in meetings called regularly by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, attended by the Directors of the specialized agencies and programmes of the system). It is not enough to summarize the usual generalities in the Plan that can be found in UNESCO documentation (which constantly mentions a fruitful collaboration); we need to provide specific details on these procedures.

Readers of the new Plan do not want to hear formulaic expressions; they want an explanation of the way we operate with the UNDP, the UNEP, the World Bank, the Council of Europe, etc.

It would also be useful to provide an idea of the results UNESCO anticipates from these collaborative efforts. The Plan should not be a place for voicing well-meaning platitudes, but for a statement of facts based on experience.

4. UNESCO's contribution to major intergovernmental conferences

Is it really necessary for UNESCO to take part in every intergovernmental conference called by the United Nations or another partner? Canada thinks not. UNESCO has neither the staff nor the resources that are required for such activities. This is why it too often gives the impression of spreading itself too thin, which leads some Member States to question its effectiveness.

F. Missions (Paragraphs 6 to 12) and functions (Paragraph 31) of UNESCO

1. Proposal to combine missions and functions in the new Plan

In the Director General's Working Document, the missions and functions of the Organization are not grouped together. Because the functions are in many ways the procedures for implementing the missions, the text of the Plan would be clearer if the two were combined.

2. UNESCO's Missions (paragraphs 6 to 12)

2.1 Emphasizing UNESCO's priority missions

The Medium-Term Plan should focus its action on its priority missions. As the Director-General wrote in his preliminary proposals for the Programme and Budget for 1994-1995 (27 C/5), UNESCO "will be stronger because it will concentrate on its priority missions." We were firmly in support of this proposal. We believe it is still pertinent, and we are raising it ourselves this year.

2.2 Clarifying and explaining UNESCO's intellectual role

UNESCO's intellectual role should be explored in the new Plan. We should not merely mention it as though it were a given. The world does not necessarily grasp the scope and impact of this role on the activities and the future of societies. We should try to explain how intellectual exchanges (exchanges of ideas and reflections) contribute to the development, progress and well-being of human beings individually and collectively, and ultimately to peace, the Organization's ultimate goal. In the past decade, this intellectual role has been challenged as an economic/technical approach has been favoured by governments and others; today, we see that attitudes are more open to intellectual values. Medium-term planning must take this into account and take advantage of it by explaining and illustrating the intellectual role in clear terms. We agree with the Director-General that the intellectual role "is the defining feature of our Organization and constitutes its

principal asset in the sphere of international co-operation" (paragraph 7). The new Plan should make an effort to explain what this entails.

3. *UNESCO's functions (Paragraph 31)*

3.1 Clarifying the list

Paragraph 31 is made up of six points listing a series of functions that are not necessarily related. The new Plan should involve a stricter classification, where such disparate items as the preparation of standard-setting instruments and the promotion of public awareness are not combined.

3.2 Completing the list

We feel that four supplementary functions should be included in the new Plan:

- training, which is one of the Organization's most important functions because of its multiplier effect and its contribution to sustainable development;
- public awareness (in the Working Document, this seems to be exclusively related to the preparation of standard-setting instruments);
- participation in the implementation of the Programme's activities by and in Member States: this is one of the principal functions of the Organization, and one of the most demanding ones for Canada;
- evaluation of the Programme's activities: in a coherent and cohesive UNESCO, this function seems essential.

3.3 Which functions should be given priority?

Member States are asked this question at the end of the list of functions that appears in the Working Document.

Canada believes that there are six priority functions among those in the list :

1. the implementation of the activities of the Programme approved by the General Conference (and not the continuation of the current dissipation);
2. training;
3. the preparation of standard-setting instruments and a follow-up of their application; a clearing house in the Organization's fields of competence (particularly the publication of World Reports on education, science and communication, which carry considerable weight);
5. transfer of knowledge;
6. evaluation of activities of the Programme approved by the General Conference.

G. State of main tendencies in UNESCO's fields of competence

After briefly reviewing the major world problems and the United Nations situation and highlighting the unique nature and the missions and functions of UNESCO, we feel that it would be important to reflect upon the large Major Programme Areas. The new Plan should briefly analyze the current stakes and expected challenges in education, science, culture, communication (including information and informatics) and social and human sciences.

These stakes and challenges should also form the basis for each corresponding section of the next three Programmes and Budgets -- 28 C/5, 29 C/5 and 30 C/5.

Following are a few examples in guise of illustration of what we hope the Director-General will derive from this proposal (these are only illustrations, and are doubtless incomplete).

In the sphere of education, for example, we should recall that education and literacy remain one of the major requirements of our times. We should also sum up the reflections of the members of the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century, who have already met on a number of occasions at Headquarters and around the world. We know that Chairman Delors will table a Report that includes more questions than answers, and the new Plan should reiterate these.

In the sphere of science, we need to review the progress that has been made since the Earth Summit in June 1992, and the major challenges that are still confront us under Agenda 21, two chapters of which UNESCO has the responsibility of implementing, as directed by the United Nations.

In the area of culture, and closely related to science, we should evoke the relationships that exist between culture and the environment and culture and development. The recently published Preliminary Draft of the World Report on Culture and Development could serve as the conceptual framework for this part of the Medium-Term Plan.

The conflict of cultures and civilizations that we fear will grow greater in the coming years should be discussed, as well as the need to promote a culture of tolerance and an intercultural dialogue.

Under the heading of communication, the electronic highway with all its inherent dangers, uncertainties and possibilities, should be considered as one of the current and future challenges.

In social and human sciences, we should allude to the internal ruptures of societies, social displacement, and the growing breakdown with respect to human rights.

These examples are not the list we propose, but merely a few elements that the Director-General could confirm and complete.

H. Partnership (Paragraphs 13 to 16)

1. UNESCO and its partners

The next Plan should sketch out the broad lines of a policy of partnership for UNESCO. There is a strong consensus among Member States concerning the importance of partnership, which is indeed one of the essential characteristics of UNESCO's new identity. Until now, partnership in UNESCO was practised on an occasional basis. Because it constitutes a vital need of the Organization, the Fourth Plan should involve Member States in in-depth reflection on the issue.

The idea of a "united front of multilateral assistance" (paragraph 13) is attractive at first glance, and in a way, we echo it each time we encourage the Secretariat to co-operate as much as possible with the other specialized institutions of the United Nations System. However, we have reservations concerning a united front with the Bretton Woods institutions, which we feel would resemble an alliance of unequally matched strengths for UNESCO. Canada supports the idea of partnership as long as UNESCO retains its unique nature and sees no change in its role with respect to concepts and values. We would like the Plan to be more explicit on this point than is the Director-General's Working Document. How, for example, are we to reconcile the universal nature and humanist concepts of UNESCO with the economic concepts, financial directives and narrower interests of the Bretton Woods institutions?

While partnership, which is one of the main characteristics of the life of contemporary societies, receives our support, it is not legitimate for all activities. We want to warn the Organization against associations that may be attractive from a material perspective or for the prestige they could bring, but which would lead us to deviate from our missions.

The Plan should reaffirm the importance of partnership with international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that support and prolong UNESCO's action. After fifty years of co-operation, the Plan should involve UNESCO in a review of its ties with NGOs.

Specific mention should be made of the partnership with the private sector, which plays a growing role in UNESCO's areas of jurisdiction, particularly in education.

2. Decentralization and National Commissions

UNESCO's decentralization has been discussed at every level over a number of years, without a concept that is clear for everyone having been reached on this point. The term

means different things to the different parties concerned. The Plan should provide a clearer definition.

On of the largest Canadian government organizations, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has carried out an experiment in decentralization over the past years. This has proven extremely costly and at the 26th and 27th sessions of the General Conference led our government to pronounce itself against this type of development for UNESCO when it would not be carried out first of all in existing institutions such as the Regional and Liaison Offices and the National Commissions.

The National Commissions can play an important role in decentralization. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that they are not part of the administrative structure of Headquarters, since they are national entities and must never be identified with a Regional or Liaison Office. We agree with the proposals in Paragraph 14 concerning the National Commissions. However, any progress here will only be possible if there is State action in favour of its National Commission, as well as action on the Secretariat's part. Without a new work spirit or discipline at all levels of the Secretariat, the National Commissions will continue to lack information or receive it too late, and will continue to not be consulted when the Secretariat implements an activity in their country. It is clear that National Commissions must increasingly take over the implementation of major actions under the UNESCO programme, and thus they are an indispensable partner for the realization of Programme (C/5). This is the case for the Canadian Commission, which in 1993 organized the International UNESCO Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy (Montreal, March 1993) and which is currently organizing the International UNESCO Symposium on Women and the Media: Access to Expression and Decision-Making (Toronto, February-March 1995).

I. Concentration

The Plan should recognize the difficulties inherent in concentration, mention the efforts that have been made by Member States and the Secretariat under this heading over the years, and point out the major steps that have been taken. A brief development on this point would help make clear that the Member States, while cognizant of the difficulties involved, are continuing their efforts. The word "concentration" was long used as a magic word. Whether or not it ever did exist, the magic is no longer there, and for the new Plan to be believable it must use realistic terms.

We agree with the priorities under paragraph 30 with the following reservations: indented paragraphs 1 and 5 should be reformulated in light of the preceding comments on the term deformalization. In paragraph 5, the term radical or any other equivalent should be omitted.

In as much as the paragraphs are listed in decreasing order of importance, the first indented paragraph should follow the second (basic education), which is the most important priority.

Paragraph 5 gives exaggerated importance to UNESCO Chairs, which for now remain a means that has yet to be proven.

The Organization should establish priorities in social and human sciences, a field of competence which is curiously absent from this list.

J. UNESCO -- Agent for general mobilization? (Paragraph 12)

The dissemination of the results of UNESCO's actions is of capital importance and should be covered in the Plan. However, Paragraph 12 of the Director General's Working Document has established unrealistic objectives for the Organization. It is true that in modern societies we often influence national policies through popular opinion. However, it is beyond UNESCO's abilities to reach the majority of the population. Even the National Commissions, which are the Organization's best way of reaching populations, could not accomplish this if they were to devote all their resources to the task. We must remember that UNESCO's goal is not to reach each individual or each institution, but to ensure that education, science and culture, communication and the social and human sciences are well established in the priorities of the Member States.

In this context, it would be useful to say a few words about the Participation Programme, which has long been one of the most popular UNESCO programmes. With the approval of all Member States, its budget was increased substantially, which gave it even greater importance. For a long time, the administration of this budget has been the object of much criticism. Canada has often voiced its opinion (see letter of 23 December 1993 from the Secretary-General of the Canadian Commission to the Director-General of UNESCO, accompanying Canada's requests for the current biennium).

As we plan the future of the Organization, it would definitely be a good idea for the Secretariat to study this matter, so that the enormous public relations benefits derived from the programme vis-à-vis a host of government and non-governmental organizations are not compromised by a deficient administration.

There is no need to set up a "general mobilization" to correct this situation.

K. Maintain or diversify the three Priority Target Groups? (Paragraphs 32 and 33)

The principal advantage of maintaining the three priority target groups is to provide the Organization's action with consensual markers, concentrate its action, and avoid dispersal.

However, the experience of recent years does not permit us to voice a positive opinion on this otherwise worthy notion.

For one thing, the target groups, Africa, the least developed countries and women, do not feel they have felt the anticipated benefits of this prioritization.

For another, there is a flaw in the idea. These three groups are too often the beneficiaries and thus the targets, and all too rarely the agents of transformation that their special status should make them.

For as long as they are perceived and treated as recipients rather than active agents, the project is doomed to failure.

There is some hope, however: the project "Les Assises de l'Afrique" seems to have been adopted by the principal parties concerned.

The dossier of "women", despite the Organization's efforts including its insertion as a priority target group which is a means of promotion, continues to meet with resistance that has a demobilizing effect in certain Member States, including our own.

Canada feels it has valuable experience to contribute under this heading; the next C/5 should plan for activities that are specific to women with respect to the rise in poverty, democratic transition and the impact of globalization.

The next Plan must deal with this failure and analyze the reasons for it. The Organization must find a way of convincing its partners that being included in a priority target group "really does make a difference."

In consultations with National Commissions, a fourth target group was proposed: youth. We do not feel it would be wise to enlarge the field of priority target groups for the time being. We first need assurance that the three identified groups do feel the positive effects before we consider lengthening the list, which would lead to rivalry and frustration.

Canada would nonetheless like to see young people truly associated with the reflection and the UNESCO Programme as agents of change. At the time when the Organization is looking to the 21st century, the members of our society who will be living in that century are not yet active members of the debates that concern them more than anyone, and to which they have important contributions to make.

The Director-General wonders whether "combating exclusion could be made the watchword of the next Medium-Term Plan" (Paragraph 33). If the Organization has still not succeeded in reaching the three priority target groups that are among the most poorly provided for in this world, how can it envisage, without seriously damaging its credibility, the addition of other targets that it could not reach?

While the question is important, the term "exclusion" is a concept that needs clarification if it is to be maintained.

L. The desired framework for the 28 C/4: The Culture of Peace

The expression "Culture of Peace" occurs frequently in the Director-General's Working Document. This is not, as some have said during consultations with National Commissions, a slogan, but a message: it is the very basis of the United Nations System, and thus of UNESCO. It enters into the perspective of sustainable development perfectly, and by adopting it as the basic framework for the 28 C/4, the ethical mission of UNESCO is reaffirmed and the Organization becomes a manager of the future.

The next Plan should clarify the concept by using as signposts the considerable work that the Organization has already accomplished in this area: the Yamoussoukro Declaration; the Montreal Action Plan, adopted by the World Congress on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993, which addressed the military, the armed forces, magistrates and judges; the Declaration of 74 and its Integrated Plan of Action, as well as the current work preparing for the 44th International Conference of the International Bureau of Education; the "Assises de l'Afrique" and the International Year for Tolerance (1995). The list is not exhaustive, but indicative of the hope that the new Plan will give an important place to reflection and progress that has been or is in the process of being carried out.

The recently adopted Programme should also be mentioned, and the way the Organization adjusts to diverse realities such as the situation in Salvador. If the Director-General wants Member States to adhere to the idea of a Culture of Peace, they must be convinced that this is not a new programme or a new idea that is both costly and impractical.

The Culture of Peace must be viable in all Member States. For this, we need to convince the countries of the North as well as of the South and East that the Culture of Peace is a continuation of the work undertaken by the founders of the Organization.

The Culture of Peace must become our daily behavior and the concrete manifestation of one of the most important objectives of the Organization. It constitutes bringing up to date the very mandate of UNESCO.

M. Issues not covered in the Working Document which should be included in the 28 C/4: operation of governing bodies and budgetary situation

While the Director General's Working Document addresses programme and policy questions that will have an effect upon the life of UNESCO over six years, we are still left with the Organization's difficult financial situation and the current questions on the way the governing bodies operate (Executive Board and General Conference).

If we want the 28 C/4 to give an overview of all aspects of UNESCO, it is essential to look at current financial difficulties and their perspectives for the future. It would be very useful for the Plan to make the distinction between the ordinary budget and extra budgetary funds, in the measure in which the latter allow for the implementation of the programme activities and must often be identified by the Member States themselves (most often by their National Commissions).

As for the working methods of the governing bodies, readers of the 28 C/4 could be surprised that there is no mention of the Member States' interrogation of the operation of the General Conference, whose decisions determine the policies and programme of the Organization every two years. This part of the 28 C/4 could easily be updated if the "new design" Plan is to be a flexible instrument.

Conclusion

Canada has proposed a framework for the 28 C/4 because there is none in the Director General's Working Document, and because the lack of one poses a problem.

During the regional consultation in which we took part, participants, including Canada, seemed to have a hard time understanding the triple classification "anticipation, adaptation, concentration" (in his accompanying letter, the Director-General also mentioned "innovations"). To illustrate one of the reasons for the confusion, we asked why education, communication and culture were listed under "anticipation" while science came under "adaptation."

The Organization should avoid using terms that can be reproached for their facile nature, and even for a lack of rigor and realism.

To conclude this section, we want to reiterate our full agreement for the new formula proposed (page 1 of the letter accompanying the Director-General's Working Document and Paragraph 36 of this Document). However, we feel that if the 28 C/4 is intended as a roadmap and promotional instrument, we must adhere to a framework that is accessible for all types of potential readers.

IV. CONTENTS OF PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 1996-1997 (28 C/5)

A. Education

Paragraph 20: The term deformatization has caused a storm of protest in the world of education in Canada. It was seen as an attempt to reduce the role of the public education system, which would be totally inadmissible for a Member State like Canada. However, it was also supposed that the term aimed at emphasizing alternative forms of education and the opportunity to develop them by facilitating access to them. Distance education would be one method. If such is the sense of the term deformatization, we support the proposal while strongly suggesting that it be replaced by a less controversial term. Perhaps we could substitute the expression "promotion of alternative forms of education."

Rather than speaking of deformatization, it would have been preferable to accent the democratization of education, education equity, greater access to education and the right to education. These are terms that correspond to UNESCO's priorities and that we would like to see in the next C/5.

The C/5 should recognize the diversity of sites, forms, strategies and dispensers of education, and promote the establishment of links between the formal education system and society through means that vary from one country to the next, such as the recognition of acquired skills.

In order to do away with any ambiguity concerning UNESCO's action, the C/5 should clearly reiterate its commitment to the public teaching system. As well, the document could explicitly underline the fact that higher education is a much vaster concept than university-level education. UNESCO documents often restrict the definition of higher education to the university sector. We feel it is important to take into account the wide variety of types of post secondary education, and include the idea of collegiate teaching as well, wherever the term higher learning is employed.

The possibilities of education relating to communication technologies are more and more numerous, and we should encourage alternative forms of learning in this area. The International Commission on Education for the 21st Century is examining this issue. The next C/5 should plan for the dissemination and use of studies on the subject.

The information highway concept opens up revolutionary perspectives. We need to take action and question ourselves on its impact on traditional forms of education and the complementary role it will play. However, we have to take into account the wide gap that will be created between developed and developing countries, due to the cost of access to this new technology. Some experts feel that the disparity will be even greater than that

which resulted from the industrial revolution. The question here is what should be the ideal rate of investment in this new technology for a school with a limited budget. The question is a delicate one, given that budget restrictions exist in most countries at this time. The problem lies at the juncture of education and communication, and is a good example of interdisciplinary/intersectoral co-operation.

B. Natural Sciences

The primary recommendations from our experts in the field of Natural Sciences are the following:

1. The first part of the document (CL/3345) which directs the future UNESCO programme to have as its basis the two objectives common to the UN System (consolidation of peace and promotion of sustainable human development) by addressing key world issues which are interdisciplinary by their very nature, is well thought through and perfectly in line with recent Canadian positions at UNESCO General Conferences and is reinforced by the conclusions of UNCED and other high-level international conferences organized by UNESCO or to which UNESCO has contributed (para. 17).
2. The latter part of the CL/3345 gives insufficient consideration to the practical means, funds and mechanisms of defining and implementing interdisciplinarity at UNESCO. We should like therefore to recommend that a practical plan for implementing interdisciplinarity at UNESCO will redirect the existing strengths of the Organization. And that this can best be done by reorienting the budget to include a Special Reserve Fund for interdisciplinary projects to which existing programmes can apply. It should be well understood that these funds should be taken from the current budget and that no increase is proposed.

The inter-agency, interdisciplinary, co-operation project entitled Education and Information about the Environment and Population for Human Development must remain a high priority for the next Medium-Term Plan, Programme and Budget. This project will be considered a test of the Organization's new interdisciplinary and intersectoral orientations.

We would like to mention that in the context of this project, the *Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec (CEQ)* and the *Association québécoise pour la promotion de l'éducation relative à l'environnement (AQPERE)* are setting up a project entitled PLANETERE: First International Francophone Summit on Environmental Education and Communications. The Summit, scheduled for August 1996, is intended to create a forum which will promote sustainable human development by encouraging various forms of co-operation (technical, intellectual and financial) and the identification of future problems and potential solutions.

3. The identification of key interdisciplinary issues, including: i) sustainable development; ii) relations of the oceans and polar regions to climate change; iii) Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK); iv) communications/education in the context of the new information technologies; v) international monitoring programmes such as the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS), the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS).

Background

The proposal described in (2) above takes into account such considerations as:

- the full support of existing interests is more likely if their own programmes are not threatened and may be enhanced through co-operation and that such co-operation will result in an emerging programme based upon the highest common denominator, rather than the lowest;
- the leverage of funding has proven to be very successful, not only in motivating good projects from which only the best would be chosen, but also in motivating project proponents to include relevant new partners and in generating concomitant new resources (from partners);

The key interdisciplinary issues noted in (3) above correspond to Canadian interests and strengths. Because of its extensive geographical scope and resulting costly scientific requirements, Canada carries out much of its science through co-operative initiatives, including international ones, and consequently much of the best science in Canada has a relationship with UNESCO's international/intergovernmental science programmes (IOC, IGCP, IHP, MAB). As a result, Canadians have sought out (successfully) a lead role in these UNESCO programmes in order that the science which they carry out also responds to Canadian priorities. The four intergovernmental committees should evolve toward more co-operation among themselves (more joint meetings and projects) without their specificity being threatened. Moreover, the future C/5 should set aside funds to implement recommendations made at the joint meeting of Chairs of the four intergovernmental committees held on 5 November 1993. Furthermore, Canada wishes to put priority on the following five areas:

1. Achievement of sustainable development

Canada is becoming deeply committed to the multi-sectoral approach to achieving sustainable development enunciated by the World Commission on Environment and Development - the Brundtland Commission (indeed the Commission's Secretary General was a Canadian), and following the 1986 visit of the Commission, Canada undertook related national initiatives, notably, the establishment by the Parliament of Canada in 1988 of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. The National Round Table is a multi-sectoral body bringing together eminent Canadians from all sectors of society - government, industry, labour, academia, and

environmental organizations, and is intended to play the role of catalyst in identifying, explaining and promoting, in all sectors of Canadian society and in all regions of Canada, principles and practices of sustainable development. Provincial Round Tables were subsequently established as well as a number of municipal Round Tables.

It should be recalled that UNESCO was appointed task manager within the UN System for Chapters 35 Science for Sustainable Development and Chapter 36 Promoting Public Awareness and Training of Agenda 21, adopted by the Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro, 1992). UNESCO is of course deeply involved in the implementation of many of the other chapters of Agenda 21 as they deal with the Organization's mandate. This should be the main source of activities of the next C/5.

As a follow-up to the Earth Summit (where again a Canadian was appointed Secretary-General) Canada established, in November 1992, the *Projet de société*, a multi-stakeholder coalition, drawn from over 80 sectors of Canadian society, to help promote Canada's transition to a sustainable future. The immediate goal of the *Projet de société* is to design a *National Sustainable Development Strategy*, identified in Agenda 21 as a pivotal mechanism for countries to implement the actions and accords agreed to at the Earth Summit.

In view of the preceding, it is not surprising that Canada has strongly promoted and continues to strongly support the intersectoral approach that UNESCO is undertaking. The national sustainable development infrastructure that Canada is beginning to put in place will permit the country to greatly benefit from these emerging UNESCO interdisciplinary projects.

2. Relations of the oceans and polar regions to climate change

- 3. Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)** is not a new theme for UNESCO. The Marine Sciences Programme has long supported TEK research, the Culture Sector has given "World Decade for Cultural Development" status to TEK projects and has contributed to such initiatives as "Amerindia 92", created by UNESCO to learn of indigenous peoples' insight into the encounter of Europe, Asia, Africa and America; the Social Sciences Sector assisted in the organization of the International Workshop on Indigenous Knowledge and Community-Based Resources Management (Winnipeg, September 1991), co-sponsored by UNESCO Canada/MAB and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Research Council, with assistance from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (through the UNESCO/CIDA Assistance Programme), the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the Federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs; representation was made to the April 1994 Session of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century; and the Man and the Biosphere Programme supports TEK through its Northern Sciences Network and the 'People and Plants' programme. (From the communications perspective, it is important to note that Canada's Northern Indigenous peoples have demonstrated a particular facility with computer

technology.) Indeed, UNESCO will soon be publishing two special editions of *Nature and Resources* on the theme of Traditional Ecological Knowledge. As well the UNESCO Regional Office for Science and Technology in South-East Asia (Jakarta) has recently written to the Canadian Commission on behalf of the UNESCO/ANTARA EARTHWIRE Workshop requesting support for Traditional Ecological Knowledge initiatives including a multi-nation UNESCO Chair in Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

However, within the UN System, some elements of Traditional Ecological Knowledge are dealt with by FAO, but the subject is not tackled by any agency in all its dimensions. Similarly, it does not appear that the UN System has yet designated a 'Task Manager' for Chapter 26 of Agenda 21 (which is dedicated to indigenous peoples) and "if UNESCO is truly concerned with knowledge, then indigenous, local and traditional systems of knowledge should be mobilized; if UNESCO's intellectual role is the defining feature of the Organization, and constitutes its principal asset, then the wisdom of indigenous and local peoples based upon many centuries of living as part of the planet's ecosystems should be included as part of that role."

The period 1 January 1994 to 9 December 1994 has been set aside for planning the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Article 9 of the proclamation "requests specialized agencies...and other organizations of the United Nations System to consider with governments and in partnership with indigenous peoples how they can contribute to the success of the Decade..." in the context of Traditional Ecological Knowledge which would explore its contributions and encourage its application in intersecting areas of development, environment, culture, education and communications. In the context of the next C/5, UNESCO should give attention to this topic and plan some major activities in that regard.

4. UNESCO should focus its efforts on taking a leading role in communications in the broadest possible meaning and **in the context of the new information technologies**. Communication in education, science, culture, etc.; communication as a way of creating future knowledge; communication in teaching; communication in training; communication in doing research; communication in disseminating information; communication in developing relationships. The closest term to communication of this kind which may be interpreted in the narrow and classical way will be networking. Networking of knowledge, networking of people. Networks as structural units of a future society. This concept is very well suited for decentralized systems.
5. International monitoring programmes such as the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS) and the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS).

C. Culture

General Comments

The creation of a global cultural market is not isolated from the exponential growth in contemporary communications media. Instant and up-to-the-minute knowledge of what is going on in the universe, garnered through television, engenders new awareness. Information highways, hypertext, multimedia techniques and virtual reality also lend themselves to profound modification of our thought patterns. It is impossible to think of culture in the international context without dealing with the influence of new technologies on cultural enterprises and on the very definition of our cultures.

Cross border television is here. It is an extraordinarily powerful cultural instrument. Every day, information technologies alter our cultural landscape. However, it is not possible to predict all the effects of technology, and the transition to an information society will not occur without clashes. The challenge to be faced is how to take advantage of this unprecedented turmoil in mass cultural products, to learn lessons about respect for others and self-assertion.

The interaction of culture and communication in association with the quickly advancing means of digital communications systems is a critical issue and should be addressed now, even though the questions to be posed are still being formulated. If freedom and access are to be contingencies in the digital transfer of information, attention should be given now to regulatory implications and how corporations, governments, or other agents of control could delimit access. Even now before the system is fully functional, a "crisis of content" could be anticipated -- the culturally-deficient pursuit in corporate profits could dominate the system very quickly, making difficult or even impossible any favourable opportunity for culturally-derived (dare one suggest artistically-derived), newly-created materials of quality.

The World Commission on Culture and Development

(Paragraph 9) - Canada has always supported the work of the World Commission on Culture and Development being financed from extra-budgetary funds. To this end, a C\$100,000 contribution has been made by the Canadian International Development Agency, in addition to technical aid extended through the loan of an official from the Department of Canadian Heritage to the Commission Secretariat and a contribution to the document entitled *Cultural Dimension of Development - Toward a Practical Approach: Summary of Methodological Experiences in Taking Cultural Factors into Account in Development*. Discussions are also underway with a view to holding a working meeting of this Commission in Canada.

The impact of the World Commission has the potential of becoming the most significant legacy of the "World Decade for Cultural Development," if enough attention can be attracted to its recommendations. Coinciding with the anticipated results, the Secretariat at UNESCO could be preparing a multi-level, multi-faceted 'marketing' plan for the interpretation, application and promotion of the World Commission's report and recommendations.

Memory of the Future

We are in entire agreement with the proposed emphasis on the cultural sphere, for the future and the past. However, the expression "memory of the future" posed an interpretation problem for our experts. They wondered if this was another way of referring to the Memory of the World project or if these were two different concepts. "Memory of the future" also seemed to exclude contemporary cultural manifestations, focusing on future culture unincarnated by its separation from the present. If there is an attachment to this concept, the Secretariat should shed some light on it in the C/4 and C/5.

Culture and Economics

It must be recognized that at a time when trade is becoming worldwide and information technologies are exploding, our cultural resources have also become powerful economic development tools. Culture and economics are now an acknowledged couple, and public authorities must encourage their healthy progress.

Heritage

We support natural and cultural heritage remaining a UNESCO priority. Moreover, if the assertion is made that the preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage are imperative for UNESCO, it follows that salvage operations must be associated with development activities. This is the area of competence of the World Heritage Cities Organization (WHCO) and of tourism, an economic development source for local populations, as the craft industry may be.

Canada would be pleased to find out whether it can host the modular photo exhibition of world heritage sites accompanied by written and audiovisual material, scheduled for distribution starting in 1995.

Further to the Canadian Museum of Civilization's proposal in the summer of 1993, we are considering the possibility of becoming the depository of the "International Archives of Epics". Canada would see a role of this nature as a tangible implementation of the 1989 Recommendation on safeguarding traditional and popular culture and as one of the planned "Memory of the World" activities, while also being part of the Canadian response to the UNESCO Director General's appeal to save the world's audiovisual

heritage. Before committing itself, Canada would like to further its inquiries into the composition and operation of the International Advisory Committee on the "Archives of the Epics" project.

Canada supports a separate international agreement on non-physical heritage being negotiated rather than linking it to the existing Convention on World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Cultural tourism

The proposed orientation toward cultural tourism is completely in line with our own priorities. To this end, the following must be encouraged:

- . links between cultural tourism, the environment and society in general, and the necessity of sound cultural tourism practises;
- . cultural tourism education in elementary and secondary schools, universities, colleges and technical training establishments;
- . co-operation between educators and those responsible for the development of cultural resources and tourism;
- . diversification of the economy with emphasis on creativity; marketing creativity; the development of high-quality cultural tourist products reinforcing cultural identity and a sense of place; and activities based on cultural heritage;
- . development of mechanisms to acknowledge, validate and manage local/regional/national resources;
- . co-operation with local and municipal recreation services to develop local and regional strategies with a view to quality cultural tourism as a receiver and transmitter.

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO's Sub-Commission on Culture and the World Decade for Cultural Development has agreed to pay particular attention to the issue of cultural tourism during its upcoming deliberations.

Finally, Canada is considering the possibility of hosting the last meeting of experts on local culture in 1997, and Québec City has been suggested as a venue, given its status as a World Heritage site.

Preparing young people to live in multi-cultural and multi-ethnic societies

This is one of the few references to "youth" in the planning document and is most welcome. However, "youth culture" as a very broad category should be introduced as demanding attention from UNESCO on a larger scale than the necessary preparation for tolerance and acceptance of differing race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and nationality. What are their values and ambitions? How can they be better supported to take charge of the uncertain world created by their elders? "Youth culture" and its many facets should be elevated in UNESCO's agenda.

Cultural statistics

UNESCO is the only international agency which has undertaken to provide guidelines for comparable cultural statistics. Canada is of the view that the Framework for Cultural Statistics which has been recognized as an activity of the World Decade for Cultural Development, needs further development, and believes that resources be put aside in the programme to improve it. Culture is the only area within UNESCO's mandate for which there are no agreed standards for international statistics.

The next C/5 should plan activities in order to give UNESCO a leading role in co-ordinating further work. There is no means to link cultural statistics to other classification systems such as ICSO (International Standard Classification of Occupations), ISIC (International Standard Industrial Classification) and ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education).

With increasing global integration of cultural industries, and on-going convergence of the technologies available to bring culture to consumers, there is a growing need to obtain reliable, internationally comparable statistics on culture. This requires a balancing of specifically cultural, economic and social measures which relate to the constituent parts of the cultural sector: the individuals who work within the sector, making cultural production possible; the organizations and industries which produce, distribute and retail cultural goods and services; the parts of government which present, support, regulate, or otherwise affect culture; and finally, the consumers, the people who utilize the output resulting from the activities of the other parts of the sector. All this needs to be measured, studied and understood if the role of the cultural industries in the promotion of cultural development is to be strengthened, especially in less developed countries.

UNESCO's Normative Action

1. *The Hague Convention*

Canada's reasons for not signing the 1954 Hague Convention (on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict) when it was drawn up no longer exist, and consultation with the Departments concerned is underway with a view to imminent ratification of this Convention, whose spirit Canada has always respected.

UNESCO's goal should be the improvement of the Convention and its ratification by the greatest number of countries, making it a true instrument of heritage preservation and protection. An improved Convention must both reflect recent evolution in the concepts of heritage and change in the forms of conflict, and encourage development of a strategy to educate both the public and heritage protection experts.

2. *Copyright*

Because we view creators as the essential spirit and driving force of the cultural sector, one area of significant concern is that of intellectual property, specifically the areas of copyright, neighbouring rights and performers' rights. Copyright and related protections should be integrated as full components of cultural development and growth, rather than as ad hoc provisions which arrive long after they should, merely an addendum to the action plan.

UNESCO should consider working with developing nations to administer strong intellectual property protections which ensure that revenues realized from domestic cultural goods and services remain within or are channeled back to the country from which they came. Many international copyright conventions can be referred to as models for developing domestic laws which enable the expansion of opportunities for cultural development.

In the planning of the C/5 activities, the Secretariat should use the recommendations of the meeting organized by the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Law, on "Material Culture in Flux; Law and Policy of Repatriation of Cultural Property," which gathered 70 lawyers, museologists and Canadian First Nations peoples considering each other's perspectives on this and related issues. UNESCO financially supported this event through its Participation Programme for 1994-1995.

Status of the Artist

Canada will seriously examine the possibility of hosting an intergovernmental conference on the status of artists during 1996-1997, and proposes meetings with Secretariat members to discuss this possibility further.

Books and reading

Culture is an unusual phenomenon that combines aspects of our social and economic systems. Cultural products are rarely consumed in the traditional sense. Reading a book may cost money, certainly costs time, but in no sense uses up the book. It is there to be loaned or read again. What has happened is an emotional and intellectual exchange, which affects the user and may affect future exchanges. Cultural output is cumulative. Canada will therefore support any activity encouraging the distribution of books and reading.

Clearing house for international comparative research

In June 1994, the Department of Canadian Heritage organized an international symposium entitled "Crossing Frontiers: Issues of Culture, Heritage and Identity in a Comparative Context". This initiative was recognized and partially funded by UNESCO as a World Decade for Cultural Development project. The Symposium was attended by 200 policy-makers, researchers, academics and artists from over 15 countries including South America, Asia-Pacific, United States, Australia and Europe. One of the proposals emerging from the Symposium was the need to establish a clearing house for international comparative policy research in the heritage and culture areas. This idea was well received by the Symposium including representatives from cultural and heritage research institutes from around the world.

Canada is interested in seeing the realization of the project. It was suggested that Culturelink (an initiative of The Institute for Development and International Relations in Zagreb), an existing, yet not necessarily specialized cultural documentation and research network, become the hub of such a clearing house. Updates, bibliographic reviews, a who's who of researchers and abstracts on the state of international comparative research would form the basis of a specialized edition to be published annually by Culturelink and made electronically available through the Internet. Culturelink, a UNESCO/Council of Europe funded network could work on this activity in co-operation with institutes and researchers from around the world, including Canada, which could provide technical advice and act as regional facilitators for the project.

D. Communication, Information and Informatics

Our experts feel that over the next few years, UNESCO should promote the development of global information policies based on the growing interaction between activities previously considered distinct: education and training; learning and recreation; telecommunications and broadcasting; informatics and communication networks; book and periodical publishing and the provision of educational software programmes; intellectual standards and property. An information policy must also deal with such questions as the protection of private life, discriminatory content, the harmonization of standards, copyright.

An information policy framework would help define the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the various public and private sector stakeholders with respect to access to information. Such a policy would also recognize the abundant growth of computerized information and its crucial role in any economic development strategy, for both developed and developing countries.

An information policy would also be based on developing policies with respect to the electronic highway in Canada, the United States, Japan and Europe, and on government projects such as Canada's CANARIE project (Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education).

Last, an information policy should be jointly developed with a learning policy, given the intersectoral links it has with information: the mastery of different types of information, various forms of access to information; different technologies for storage, transmission or dissemination, and the use of information; the need for continuing education for adding via information to the value of social, cultural and economic activities.

We would like to underscore the importance for UNESCO to develop a global information policy suited to the global phenomenon of the information society. This policy would recognize the importance of all stakeholders in the sphere of information -- whether they are involved in the production or creation of information, storage, location or processing of information, its dissemination, transmission or use.

The C/4 could consider giving the Organization this general perspective, and the C/5, as of the first biennium, could propose concrete activities to this end.

The promotion of freedom of expression, the free circulation of information and the pluralism of the media, and the development of human resources and infrastructures in information and communication should continue to be UNESCO action priorities. Activities in this field should be included in the C/5.

Interdisciplinary and Inter-Agency Project of Co-operation entitled "Environment and Population Education and Information for Human Development"

The interdisciplinary project entitled "Environment and Population Education and Information for Human Development" should remain a high priority in the next biennium and Medium-Term Plan. However, it is unfortunate that to date the project's officials have not called on the General Information Programme for their contribution to the project. The long-term strategic orientations of the PGI that cover the next two Medium-Term Plans (12 years) have identified the following four missions as priorities: conserving the memory of the world; information in the service of education, learning and scientific research; information in the service of human development; and information in the service of environmental management.

E. Social and Human Sciences

The Director-General's Working Document is noticeably silent as to the role and position of the social and human sciences in the Organization. We find this most unfortunate and hope that the following remarks will make it possible to substantially reinforce this part of the 28 C/5.

The place that UNESCO seeks to establish for itself at the forefront of thought cannot be accomplished without an in-depth reflection on society (see Paragraph 9).

Naturally, the major international commissions such as the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century (Delors) and the World Commission on Culture and Development (Perez de Cuellar), both attached to UNESCO, are in the process of accomplishing (their reports are expected in 1995) considerable and far-sighted work. However, the paths, barriers and challenges they identify will require years of research and reflection.

These Commissions are taking the pulse, but we cannot expect them to replace the UNESCO programmes.

It is thus essential for the Organization to develop a dynamic social sciences program that the new Intergovernmental MOST Programme, no matter what its scope, could not replace.

UNESCO is the only multilateral organization in a position to undertake some kind of action in the social and human sciences.

Without this, reflection in a large number of countries runs the risk of being replaced by the results of studies and research conducted by some of the large agencies within the United Nations System. At a time when we claim to favour pluralism, thought risks

becoming increasingly one-dimensional if it depends on a single data source (the World Bank), which will be reproduced ad infinitum by a large number of distribution channels. UNESCO must not buy the World Bank's argument that locally collected data is not reliable, not relevant to comparisons, and expensive to obtain.

UNESCO must promote the development of local research capacities; otherwise, how can we proceed to the analysis and criticism necessary to the operation of civil society (on which we count more and more)?

V. CONCLUSION

The interest of this consultation on the next Plan and Programme and Budget, we believe, lies in the concerted effort of Member States and the Secretariat to give the Plan a form and spirit that allow it to fulfil a truly useful function in accomplishing UNESCO's mandate. We must not assume that the previous Plans or the existing Plan were designed according to the same model, or that our predecessors did not also make the necessary efforts of adaptation, or that they were unsuccessful in their efforts. On the contrary, there has been an evolution from one Plan to the next that deserves acknowledgment and that was well described by the Secretariat in its document 27 C/15. Today, these Plans give us useful information and constitute precious tools of historical knowledge. However, we should also recognize that during the period they were in effect they did not fulfil their role as guide and conceptual framework as well as they might have, and too often they were inspired by the Programmes and Budgets rather than being the inspiration for the latter, which was their original goal.

We hope that the Plan we are currently designing will finally serve as a source of inspiration for the Programme and Budget, and this will be the measure of its success. Within the development of our collective reflection, it should lie between the UNESCO Constitution, which establishes the foundations of the Organization, and the Programmes and Budgets, which translate UNESCO's vocation into concrete activities. The Plan is thus a roadmap, as we described it earlier, which updates the mandate for a given period. It must establish a relationship between the Organization's mandate as laid out in the Constitution and the challenges of the contemporary world, and lead to concrete action.

We believe the Plan must have structures that are original and different from those of the Programme and Budget. This is why we wanted to propose a framework for the future Plan. This would not be unconnected to the Programme and Budget, which would be directly inspired by the contents of the Plan. We believe that the relationship between the two documents should not be one of form, but of content, with the Plan preceding and inspiring the Programme.

In order to make the relationship between the two concrete, we want to suggest that at least the table of contents of the Plan should appear at the beginning of the Programme and Budget, thereby making it clear to readers that there is a link between the two documents. We should avoid the current situation, where there is a gap between the Plan and Programme and the impression that the two are not related.

By being briefer, with accessible language, flexible and adaptable, situating the founding principles in a modern framework that inspires action, the Medium-Term Plan will play the active role the Organization needs and become an excellent instrument of promotion.



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COPY FOR INFORMATION

reference: CL/3345

08 MAR 1994

Subject: Consultation of Member States, Associate Members and intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations on the preparation of the Draft Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001 and the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997

Madam/Sir,

The preparation of the fourth Medium-Term Plan, which will bring UNESCO into the twenty-first century, will be one of the Organization's most vital tasks over the next two years. At a time of unprecedented political, economic and social upheaval but also of great opportunities for action to respond to these upheavals, UNESCO must be more receptive than ever to the views of the different countries and specially their intellectual communities in its efforts to analyse emerging trends and their probable evolution. It will then be able to alert opinion and mobilize the international community to tackle these new challenges. Anticipation, adaptation and innovation: these are the principles on which we must base our strategy and that we must constantly bear in mind as we turn our thoughts to the new Plan. For the Organization's effectiveness will depend on its ability to anticipate events and to prepare for rapid changes in the world.

This was the spirit in which I submitted to the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session document 27 C/15 entitled 'Preliminary considerations concerning medium-term planning as from 1996'. During the general policy debate, the Member States were in favour of a six-year plan which would set out the major lines of emphasis for the Organization's mission and its action during the period 1996-2001. The primary purpose of the Plan should be to describe clearly and concisely the general policy to be followed, the priority fields of action and the general outline of the strategies to be implemented, while remaining sufficiently flexible to allow adjustments to be made in order to cope with emergencies and new problems that might arise during the period covered by the Plan. The Member States also wanted to have a more flexible form of consultation than in the past, which would eliminate long and complex questionnaires and more directly involve all our partners, particularly the intellectual community, in the preparation of the programme.

In carrying out this consultation, I intend to make the most of the meetings of the National Commissions for UNESCO scheduled to be held during the current biennium; ten of these meetings will in fact be held at subregional, regional and interregional level between now

and the end of July 1994. By consulting the Organization's key partners, established in accordance with Article VII of its Constitution, we hope to identify, in a concrete manner, the needs and priorities of each Member State as expressed by its government and intellectual community. The dates of these meetings may be found in Annex I to this letter. I should be grateful if you would take the necessary steps to ensure that your National Commission can prepare for the consultation to be held in your region or subregion and thus make its valuable contribution.

In addition to the representatives of the National Commissions and the heads of UNESCO field offices and units, I also intend to invite to these meetings the members of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century and of the World Commission on Culture and Development from the region or subregion concerned to enable them to take part in the discussions that will undoubtedly bear on the subjects debated in those two Commissions and to inform the National Commissions about their work. Systematic exchanges of information between regions and subregions will, of course, be organized on the outcome of the different meetings.

I have great expectations of this kind of consultation and of the direct contact that should thus be established between the Member States, through their National Commissions, and the Secretariat. A working document, which may be found in Annex II, has been prepared to assist in the preparations for these meetings. The document, which is intentionally brief, takes the form of a 'table of contents'; its main purpose is to stimulate ideas and present various hypotheses. It should enable the Member States to state their views on the six-year Plan and the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997 as clearly as possible.

As well as making its contribution during the meeting of the National Commissions, each Member State may, if it so wishes, send me in writing its observations and proposals on both the Plan document and the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997, to reach me by *31 July 1994 at the latest*.

I have, in fact, to submit to the Executive Board at its 145th session, in October 1994, a report setting out the conclusions of the consultations carried out in the first half of 1994, together with proposals relating to both the content and the form of the two documents. The Draft Plan and the Draft Programme and Budget will then be prepared on the basis of the guidelines provided by the Executive Board for consideration by the General Conference at its twenty-eighth session in October 1995.

Accept, Madam/Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Enclosures: 2

Federico Mayor
Director-General

ANNEX I

TIMETABLE FOR CONSULTATION OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS

AFRICA

Kenya (East and Southern Africa): 16 May-20 May 1994

Guinea (West Africa): 23 May-27 May 1994

Chad (Central Africa): 27 June-1 July 1994

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Ecuador (Latin America except Southern Cone): 30 May-2 June 1994

Suriname (Caribbean): 11 July-15 July 1994

Uruguay (Southern Cone): 18 July-22 July 1994

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Thailand (Asia): 9 May-13 May 1994

Samoa (Pacific): 4 July-8 July 1994

ARAB STATES

Jordan: 25 June-29 June 1994

EUROPE

Poland: 12 June-16 June 1994

INTERREGIONAL CONSULTATION

Portugal: 26 July-30 July 1994

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONSULTATION ON DRAFT MEDIUM-TERM
PLAN FOR 1996-2001 AND DRAFT PROGRAMME
AND BUDGET FOR 1996-1997

WORKING DOCUMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

1. Never before in history has the world experienced upheavals so far-reaching and so rapid as those that have taken place in this final decade of the twentieth century, giving rise at once to great hopes and urgent challenges.

2. Great hopes were engendered by the end of the East/West ideological divide, which removed a number of obstacles to the attainment of the goals for which the United Nations system was created. The increasingly universal demand for the exercise of human rights, the progress of democracy, the abolition of apartheid, the signature of the Israel-Palestinian Protocol Agreement, the initiatives taken by the international community to prevent conflict and maintain peace, and the boost that a substantial reduction in armaments could give to development - all these are grounds for hoping for a better future.

3. The moves towards regional or subregional integration currently under way in different parts of the world - in Europe and around the Mediterranean, in Asia and around the Pacific, between North and South America and within Latin America - also constitute new opportunities for peace and development. Dictated in the first instance by economics and trade, these initiatives offer potential frameworks for co-operation in culture, education, the sharing of ideas and the transfer of knowledge, thereby opening the way to increased mutual understanding in a spirit of tolerance and respect for difference.

4. At the same time, our world is in search of adequate responses to persistent or renewed threats to its security. Violence, intolerance and discrimination, and the upsurge of extremism, are the most dramatic signs of divisions affecting the cohesion of society. They are above all symptoms of other threats, often obscured by ideological confrontation, which now force themselves upon our attention: the widening gap between North and South; intolerable inequalities at international level and within nations; the escalation of poverty and exclusion, even within industrial societies; excessive population growth which, when combined with situations of extreme destitution, produces unprecedented migratory flows; the alarming pollution of the planet; new pandemics and mounting drug abuse.

5. The adoption of a planetary viewpoint has today become the paramount condition of our survival. It is vital that we radically change our behaviour and criteria with regard to the consumption of energy and raw materials, to production, to employment and to material well-being. We must learn as a matter of urgency to invest in peace what we have previously invested in war. This is the message that UNESCO, as the intellectual organization of the United Nations system, must spread in order to prevent a return to situations of mistrust or confrontation that would seriously jeopardize the fragile prospects for peace and development and the very future of generations to come.

I. UNESCO'S MISSIONS

6. The reform of the United Nations system is on the agenda: it is for each institution as well as for the system as a whole to re-examine their priority objectives so as to adapt them to new challenges and opportunities. UNESCO has been engaged in this exercise for some years, but the preparation of the Medium-Term Plan for 1996-2001 should be the occasion to take this process a step further by delineating a UNESCO more focused on its priority missions and on the tasks it is best qualified to perform, having regard to its distinctive characteristics.

7. In this respect, the twenty-seventh session of the General Conference marked a significant advance: a broad consensus emerged on the need to concentrate efforts on the two objectives common to the United Nations system as a whole: the consolidation of peace and the promotion of

sustainable human development. The General Conference also underlined the importance of UNESCO's intellectual role, which is the defining feature of our Organization and constitutes its principle asset in the sphere of international co-operation.

8. The General Conference thereby reaffirmed the continuing relevance of the provisions of the Preamble and Article I of the Constitution, which underline the decisive role of knowledge in attaining the 'objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind'. The most effective means of combating 'ignorance of each other's ways and lives' and the 'denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect for men' is by promoting the 'free flow of ideas by word and image' and by helping to 'maintain, increase and diffuse knowledge'. UNESCO's fundamental mission of promoting access to, and the transfer and sharing of, knowledge having been thus reaffirmed, the task is now to specify the most effective means of achieving these objectives in the light of the challenges that we will face in the early twenty-first century.

9. These challenges will require radical changes in the policies pursued by governments both nationally and internationally. UNESCO must therefore become a privileged partner of States as well as of the intellectual and professional communities in each of its fields of competence. It must be in a position to be present whenever decision-makers meet to consider matters within these fields, so as to offer guidance, advice and assessment. This calls for strengthening activities aimed at:

- (i) anticipating and preparing innovatory strategies; as is, for example, the purpose of such forums as the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, the World Commission on Culture and Development and the International Bio-ethics Committee;
- (ii) gathering and circulating for the attention of decision-makers reliable information on the present situation and probable trends in our fields of competence; in this context, the world reports* published by UNESCO are already authoritative;**
- (iii) encouraging political leaders at the highest level to make firm commitments. This was the purpose of the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All and of the Education for All New Delhi Summit of Nine High-Population Developing Countries. This is also the aim of the contribution made by UNESCO to the major intergovernmental conferences recently organized by the United Nations.

10. In recent years, UNESCO has devoted a great deal of effort to all these tasks; the initiatives taken have helped to enhance its international prestige and establish its credibility both with national decision-makers and with the heads of the various institutions of the United Nations system.

11. But the time would now seem right - while continuing to strengthen our co-operation with Member States - to turn our attention more to those who are the main subjects, both as actors and beneficiaries, of the United Nations Charter and the UNESCO Constitution - the peoples of the world; in other words, the essential fabric of society and its main strands - parliamentarians, town councils, grass-root communities, non-governmental organizations, associations, trade unions, enterprises and the media, giving particular importance to efforts in favour of young people.

12. At a time when functions and roles that had previously been performed by the State are being taken over almost everywhere by new actors, in societies where attitudes are shaped less and less by traditional institutions and when at the same time national policies - often dictated by short-term considerations - can be permanently influenced by mass movements of popular opinion, should not UNESCO, more than in the past, be attempting to bring about a sort of 'general mobilization' to promote the necessary changes of direction? Should it not be endeavouring to put over its messages

* World Education Report (1991, 1993); World Science Report (1993); World Communication Report (1990).

** We should perhaps explore other means of circulating regular information on the 'state of the planet' in areas vital to our common survival (population, pollution, etc.).

not only to the highest levels of decision-making, but also to the ordinary citizen? If this new strategy were to be adopted, it would entail finding new partners, revising our priorities and adapting our forms of action. It could only be implemented with the full collaboration of Member States and within a democratic context - the only one consistent with full respect for the autonomy of individuals.

II. UNESCO AND ITS PARTNERS

13. In the first place, UNESCO should further strengthen its co-operation with the institutional partners of the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions, and other intergovernmental organizations, and participate actively in building up a 'united front' of multilateral assistance. This means working tirelessly not only to realise and implement more effectively the objectives and strategies drawn up jointly (e.g. Jomtien Framework for Action concerning education for all and the follow-up to the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - UNCED), but also to identify new areas of genuine co-operation so as to improve complementarity and synergy of action at international, regional and national levels. Similarly, international intellectual co-operation should be reinforced by improving and extending UNESCO's links with the world's intellectual and scientific communities.

14. The strategies and methods for implementing activities must be adapted to the specific context of the problems concerned, i.e. their social, economic and cultural dimensions. For this purpose, UNESCO should co-operate still more closely with Member States and mobilize its present and potential partners with a view to their more active participation. Sustained efforts should be made by the Secretariat but above all by Member States to provide the National Commissions with the means to fulfil the functions assigned to them by the Constitution: on the one hand, to represent the national intellectual and scientific communities and, on the other, to increase the awareness, commitment and involvement of the latter with regard to UNESCO's activities. In order to spread our common message and expand our action at the local level, there is also a need to co-operate with National Commissions in seeking new partners within the civil society. The development of these new partnerships calls for more effective means of action geared to specific situations and designed to ensure that activities have an increased multiplier effect.

15. UNESCO's field offices and units should be strengthened and expanded: as the Organization's 'antennae' in the field, they are well placed to establish interactive relations with our various present and potential partners at regional and national levels. The profile of each field office will have to be adapted to the priority needs and expectations of the Member States they serve in such a way as to enable them to respond by drawing fully on the expertise of the National Commissions and intellectual communities and on representatives of the civil society. The field offices should also reinforce co-operation with UNESCO's institutional partners and other bilateral and multilateral donors active in the Member States, for example, in following up within the prescribed framework concerted action agreed at global level. This would also enable the Organization to respond more effectively to the priority needs of the Member States and increase the efficiency of the programming process, through an improved feedback system.

* For example:

- development of pilot operations carried out with municipal authorities or community movements and associations;
- co-operation with university councils and vice-chancellors to engage their interest in the Organization's programmes and activities, and encourage them to serve as promoters of its ideals;
- collaboration with teachers' associations and unions in order to get UNESCO's messages across;
- periodical placing of relevant information about UNESCO in mass-circulation national publications and media;
- more frequent use of goodwill ambassadors.

16. Today, technological developments make it possible to design a global interactive communication system that facilitates rapid and well-informed decision-making and provides adequate feedback. This should make it possible to reduce considerably the number of missions - particularly from Headquarters - while relying more on local expertise; the experience of national and regional institutions should indeed be better known and more fully taken into account. There is likewise a need to reduce the volume of reports and studies in favour of action in the field and so-called 'upstream' analysis and evaluation activities, which should be characterized by a rigorous and innovative approach. Only in this way will UNESCO succeed in stimulating the awareness, involvement and commitment of everyone at all levels. UNESCO cannot become involved if its Member States do not commit themselves. For instance, it is not enough to recognize that scientific development should be promoted; it is up to each country to take the measures required to translate this commitment into reality.

III. UNESCO'S ACTION

17. UNESCO's action over the period of the next Medium-Term Plan will be partly determined by commitments made at the major intergovernmental conferences it has recently convened or in which it has participated (Jomtien and Rio Conferences, Toronto World Congress for Education and Communication on Environment and Development, Montreal International Congress on Education for Human Rights and Democracy, Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, Istanbul International Congress on Population and Development), or at those to be held in 1994-1995 and beyond (United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, Fourth World Conference on Women: 'Action for Equality, Development and Peace', World Summit for Social Development, United Nations Conference on Human Settlements).

18. These commitments should have their place in an overall vision of what the Organization ought to be doing in the years to come. This is the whole purpose of the Medium-Term Plan, whose preparation and content could be based on three requirements: anticipation, adaptation and concentration. The aim of the proposals that follow, which have been drawn up from this standpoint, is to prompt an intellectual debate so that the fourth Medium-Term Plan fully performs its function of giving direction to the programme, i.e. of making it future-oriented. It is not indeed sufficient to manage the present, it is necessary to transform it.

A. Anticipation

19. The Organization's action should be conceived with a view to the medium and long term, since in many of UNESCO's areas of concern the immediate future is already implicit in present realities (growth of human populations, school failure, environmental degradation, intolerance and prejudice, etc.). Our aim should be to foresee in order to forestall, to seek ways of enabling us to keep pace with or, alternatively, to modify the probable course of events.

20. For example, should we not be encouraging the deformatization of education and envisaging on a grand scale, new forms of knowledge transfer and exchange so that education becomes a lifelong activity for all? All over the world, learning needs and requirements are expanding at such pace that education systems, even in the richest countries, cannot cope. And yet all societies possess reserves of skills and know-how that remain largely untapped, while the range of educational products and services grows ever wider, notably as a result of the possibilities opened up by communication technologies. Should we not therefore encourage alternative learning methods and facilitate the recognition of skills acquired outside institutional systems? Should we not review the whole educational process from the standpoint of learning and the learner, rather than that of teaching and the teacher? Should we not promote a radically different conception of the university as regards both its function and the way it functions, making it a place permanently accessible to all and

one that establishes links of collaboration, exchange and support between higher education and the world of work?

21. The field of communication also calls for anticipation and foresight. Our action in recent years has focused on two key areas: the promotion of freedom of expression and information, which is central to democratic life and to the emergence of a culture of peace; and the development of communication and information capacities, in terms of infrastructures and training. Yet the impact of communication on the Organization's other fields of competence and the ways it could support them do not seem to have received the attention they deserve. At a time when some are predicting the advent of a new 'civilization of the screen', particularly as a result of the growing convergence of audio-visual, telecommunication and computer technologies, should we not be seeking to derive advantage from the positive implications that these developments can have for forms of social organization, for ways of life and learning, for the creation of knowledge and its transfer, and for many aspects of cultural life? In the context of the growing globalization of communication processes, the maintenance of cultural and linguistic diversity is a major challenge. UNESCO can contribute by stimulating technological innovation and assimilation, and by encouraging the production, distribution and circulation of a diversity of cultural goods of high quality.

22. In the case of culture, should we not give to what might be called the 'memory of the future' the same importance as we have hitherto given to the memory of the past? Of course, the preservation and safeguarding of the cultural heritage are imperatives for UNESCO. Yet we should today take a closer look at the interface between the natural and the cultural heritage, the tangible and the intangible heritage, extend our understanding of the term to include those archives that constitute the 'Memory of the World' and the culture of everyday life (handicrafts, living environment, etc.), and above all link rescue operations more closely with development activities. In many countries the heritage is one of the main sources of economic development via cultural tourism and handicrafts - two fields which might in future be given greater attention in the Organization's programmes. Preserving the memory of the future also implies preparing young people to live in multicultural and multi-ethnic societies; encouraging diversity and interaction; and promoting the co-existence, within a democratic framework, of communities with multiple identities. Hence the new emphasis to be placed on questions concerning minorities and indigenous populations, on the culture of peace and democracy, and on the promotion of intercultural dialogue and tolerance.

23. Preserving the memory of the future also means preserving the rights of future generations. At a time when human rights are increasingly becoming universal standards of reference, it is important that UNESCO should provide a forum of reflection and dialogue for analyzing the ethical implications of scientific and technological progress. The action initiated in the field of bioethics is of great importance in this connection.

B. Adaptation

24. The increasingly global nature and growing complexity of the problems in today's world make it ever more necessary to adopt - at UNESCO as elsewhere - a multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach. We still have a long way to go in this regard. The following are examples of some of the areas in which there is a particular need to develop such a transdisciplinary approach.

25. In the sciences is it not time to think about replacing the traditional discipline-based approach by a thematic approach drawing on various disciplines in order to provide practical solutions to development problems? This would not mean that UNESCO should abandon its role of promoting science education and training, which not only help to develop research capabilities but also serve to shape the faculty of judgement required to choose between different technological options; the natural, social and human sciences should find a special place in the Organization's programme as

compared - for instance - with technologies which are to a large extent the result of the application of scientific knowledge.

26. There is however a fairly clear need to link more closely the two major fields of scientific knowledge and research concerned with the functioning of natural environments and of environments modified by human beings (including human settlements). Instead of separate programmes for geology, hydrology, ecology and marine sciences, could we not envisage, after more than two decades of activity, more integrated projects combining several disciplines aimed at combating certain forms environmental degradation (for example, desertification, deforestation and the erosion of biodiversity), or at addressing the problems of regions of biogeographic confluence, characterized by a very high density of human settlement and economic activity, such as the coastal zones? This would entail linking certain intergovernmental programmes, which have made it possible to build up extensive networks of co-operation, with more circumscribed projects of major interest to the Member States. Such projects would make use of the achievements of the intergovernmental programmes but would be easier to manage and would specify the results to be obtained by the end of the Plan period. They would focus primarily on the state of knowledge, on direct assistance to institutions or organizations working locally and on the implementation of research, training and demonstration activities. Another particularly important aim of these projects would be the formulation of recommendations for decision-makers, consistent with the principles of sustainable human development and based on rigorous scientific data.

27. The interdisciplinary project 'Environment and population education and information for human development' is a good example of the kind of initiative that could be adopted in order to overcome disciplinary and sectoral compartmentalization. This project, conceived following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in keeping with the agreed division of responsibilities between the different institutions of the United Nations system, should remain a top priority throughout the period of the next Medium-Term Plan.

28. More generally, UNESCO's action to promote a culture of peace demands a genuinely transdisciplinary approach. This is particularly obvious today when the Organization is being called upon increasingly to help find solutions to pre- or post-conflictual situations. The post-conflict consolidation of peace is a particularly complex task since it involves at one and the same time reconstituting social infrastructures, fostering national reconciliation, re-integrating displaced persons, constructing a basis for a democratic citizenship, helping to create endogenous capabilities and ensuring the broadest possible involvement of the population in development efforts. This is a real methodological challenge for the Organization, requiring innovative approaches spanning all its fields of competence.

C. Concentration

29. While significant progress has been made in concentrating the Organization's programme and resources on a smaller number of high-priority activities, it cannot be said that enough has been done. There is a need, given our resources and the growing range of participants in international co-operation, to continue to focus our action more exclusively on a limited number of tasks likely to have a major and lasting impact. What should be the centres around which this increased concentration should take place? The following criteria could serve as a guide to reflection on this important question.

1. *Fields of activity*

30. In the light of the foregoing considerations and having regard to the lessons derived from the implementation of the last biennial programmes and the debates of the General Conference at its twenty-seventh session, the following fields or groups of activities could be considered as meriting

top priority (it being understood that other groups of activities could be financed under the Participation Programme or from extra-budgetary resources).

- ✧ Radical reform of education systems, with emphasis on the generalization and deformatization of the teaching/learning process; the framing of national agreements to ensure the lasting character of the reform process.
- ✧ Promotion of basic education for all (in particular, the education of girls and women), mobilizing for that purpose all possible means and agents (e.g. the media, the workplace, community centres and professional groups).
- ✧ Reform of education content and curricula, with the main focus on general education and scientific literacy, and emphasizing the acquisition of values and skills enabling learners to cope with a changing environment.
- ✧ Development of vocational and professional education, and continuing training, in close association with professional circles and using a wide variety of means (media, distance learning, the workplace, etc.).
- ✧ Radical transformation and deformatization of higher education; higher education and research in the natural and the social and human sciences (UNESCO chairs; university twinning and networking).
- ✧ Strengthening of the contribution of science to human development through interdisciplinary research and training projects in the following fields: the follow-up of the recommendations of UNCED (arid and semi-arid zones, desertification; tropical ecosystems, deforestation; biodiversity; coastal zones; climate and oceans); the management of social transformations, with emphasis on the needs of social development; the development of policies and networks for exchange of scientific data and information.
- ✧ Interdisciplinary project on environment and population education and information for human development.
- ✧ Protection and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage (including archives) as an important constituent of the socio-economic and cultural development of contemporary societies, in conjunction with the development of cultural tourism and the revitalization of traditional arts and crafts.
- ✧ Strengthening the role of cultural industries (books, films, radio, T.V., etc.) in the promotion of cultural development, particularly in the least developed countries.
- ✧ Promotion of the freedom of expression, free flow of information and media pluralism, as a foundation for democratic development.
- ✧ Development of human resources and infrastructures in the areas of information and communication, utilizing where appropriate new information and communication technologies, including informatics; mobilization of the media in promoting public awareness of development problems and possible sustainable solutions.
- ✧ Promotion of intercultural dialogue, both within and across frontiers, to generate mutual confidence; formulation of educational, social and cultural policies aimed at facilitating the processes of integration in multicultural and multi-ethnic societies; promotion of educational and

3

cultural activities designed to meet the needs and aspirations of persons belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples.

- ✧ Promotion of peace, human rights and democracy through education, information, research and standard-setting activities.

2. *Functions*

31. Intellectual co-operation, which is UNESCO's main *raison d'être*, assumes various forms. Chief among these - which may be referred to as 'functions' - are the following:

- facilitating conceptual advances and assisting in the formulation of strategic options (early warning and forward-looking function involving the convening of international forums or participation in future-oriented studies; convening of intergovernmental conferences to establish goals and plans of action for the international community);
- contributing to the preparation of standard-setting instruments and monitoring their application; promotion of public awareness;
- acting as a clearing-house in our fields of competence (collection and distribution of specialized information through publications such as world reports and through the establishment of networks and data banks);
- facilitating the transfer of knowledge (training activities, twinning of universities and research establishments);
- responding to requests for expert assistance formulated by Member States (advisory services based on the possession of 'know-who', that is to say, knowing the best specialists in a given field);
- participating in co-operation for development (project identification, resource mobilization and project execution).

Which functions should UNESCO perform as a matter of priority?

3. *Target groups*

32. The Organization's action in recent years has been focused on satisfying the needs of three priority target groups: the least developed countries, the Member States of Africa, and women. These groups are the principal beneficiaries of multilateral co-operation as a whole. Should this priority be maintained and, if so, how can it best be expressed over the range of UNESCO's action?

33. More generally, should our activities not be directed more systematically to combating the various forms of exclusion, focusing as a matter of priority on the most deprived, the disenfranchised and the social rejects? The threats to international security have changed in nature: they today derive much more from these new divisions affecting the essential fabric of society and from the chronic drift into which countries and even whole continents can be drawn. In order to protect the fragile achievements resulting from current changes, combating exclusion could be made the watchword of the next Medium-Term Plan.

IV. STRUCTURE OF THE DRAFT PLAN AND THE DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

34. Although it has been defined as a conceptual framework, the Draft Medium-Term Plan has in practice been conceived as a programming framework describing in fairly precise terms the main types of activities to be undertaken. On the evidence of the debates of the General Conference, there now seems to be a very broad consensus in favour of a general policy document centred on tasks, priorities and overall strategies of action and unencumbered by any reference to the kind of activities to be undertaken or the structure of the programme to be implemented. Such a document, which would be considerably shorter and simpler than the current Plan, should specify - in the light of current and foreseeable developments in today's world - UNESCO's priority tasks and corresponding strategies having regard to the specific character of its mandate and new trends in international co-operation.

35. Two approaches are possible as concerns the presentation and structure of the Plan: the first would reflect our fields of competence - education, science, culture and communication; the second would reflect the main problems and issues in today's world (e.g. education, training and learning, environment and development, the culture of peace). This second option would have the advantage of addressing the world's major problems in their totality and of highlighting the contribution that UNESCO could make to their solution, within the scope of its remit and having regard to the strategies appropriate to the different entities involved in international co-operation. If this second approach were to be adopted, which would be the major issues that should be chosen?

36. Whatever the option selected, the Plan could begin with a brief account of the main problems addressed and the main results achieved under the Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995. That would be followed by a statement of the objectives and main strategies envisaged for the period covered by the Plan, emphasis being placed on the high priority aspects of those strategies. Such a presentation would make for a slimmer Plan and would give it a more markedly forward-looking character. The problem would then arise as to the relationship between the Plan and the biennial programmes and budgets, whose purpose is to translate into action the lines of emphasis and the objectives of the Plan. But should there necessarily be a strict correspondence between these two documents?

37. If the Plan were to describe the main lines of the strategies to be implemented while remaining sufficiently flexible to enable adjustments to be made during the six-year period, the structure of the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997 would, conversely, have to be specified in as detailed a manner as possible. In relation to the present structure and in the light of past experience, the following questions would merit discussion:

- ✧ Should the present three-tier arrangement be maintained, involving major programme areas, programmes and sub-programmes, or should we opt for a structure based on major transdisciplinary themes?
- ✧ Assuming that the present structure is maintained, how many major programme areas should there be and what should their main emphases be so as to reflect as closely as possible the priority tasks of the Organization and the ways and means of implementing them? What should be the place of programme-support activities and administrative activities? So as to streamline the document, might there not be a case for integrating the present transverse themes and programmes in the major programme areas?
- ✧ A composite structure might also be envisaged, i.e. one based on major programme areas corresponding to our fields of competence, with the addition of two or three major transverse - by nature transdisciplinary - projects aimed at addressing complex problems requiring inputs

from a number of disciplines or fields of action, such as environment and development in coastal zones, etc.?

- ✧ In the light of the above-stated principles concerning the priority tasks of the Organization, particularly as regards intellectual co-operation, what new forms of action (such as the UNITWIN programme/UNESCO chairs) could be envisaged with a view to strengthening the catalytic role of UNESCO's activities and furthering co-operation with National Commissions, intergovernmental organizations (especially those of the United Nations system) and international non-governmental organizations?
- ✧ In order to respond more effectively to the specific needs of Member States and contribute to solutions to the problems common to a number of States in a given region, would it be desirable to consider regional or subregional strategies? If so, which areas/themes/issues would be best approached in this way? How could such regional strategies be incorporated in the structure of the C/5 document? How could one ensure that these strategies were effectively implemented by the Member States concerned?
- ✧ Decentralization in this regard assumes great importance - decentralization from Headquarters to field offices and units, but above all greater participation by Member States themselves in the implementation of the programme. What is today the real capacity of the National Commissions in this regard? How can we establish solid bases for effective and credible decentralization?

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38. In order to contribute to a change of direction that has today become essential, it is vital not only to have an appropriate strategy but also to have the capacity to implement it at the right moment. It is through the action and involvement of its Member States that UNESCO will be able to play, in all those countries that share the same ideals concerning the advent of a culture of peace, its proper role in the United Nations system at this historic turning point in the approaches to a new millennium - a role that is, first and foremost, an ethical one.



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